



County of Los Angeles
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

March 2, 2006

Board of Supervisors
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First District

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Second District

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Third District

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To: Mayor, Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

**TRANSFER OF COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT AND OFFICE OF
TRAFFIC SAFETY PROGRAMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND
SENIOR SERVICES TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES**

On December 14, 2004, on motion of Supervisor Molina, the Board instructed the Chief Administrative Officer to: 1) Review the effectiveness of the transfer of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program from the Department of Community and Senior Services (CSS) to the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) after a full year of implementation; 2) Report back to the Board with findings and any recommendations by March 1, 2006; and 3) Return to the Board with the corresponding appropriations reductions in CSS salaries budget to account for the positions transferred.

We have completed our review of the effectiveness of the transfer of the CSBG program from CSS to DPSS. Overall, we found that the transfer was completed with minimal or no impact to services provided to program participants. Additionally, seven of the ten recommendations identified in the Auditor-Controller's (A-C) February 11, 2005 report on their investigation of the Community Action Board (CAB) have been implemented. All programs and staff for CSBG and the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) have been absorbed and incorporated into DPSS seamlessly.

Since the transfer, these two programs have improved the delivery of service, monitoring, and reporting of the CSBG programs, consistent with State and federal guidelines, by incorporating existing DPSS fiscal controls and in-house technology. Based on the above, it is recommended that DPSS retain the CSBG and OTS staff and programs.

Automation of Reporting Functions

The CSBG and OTS Programs serve similar clients as those already served by DPSS. Assisting clients to reach self-sufficiency is an important goal for all DPSS programs and CSBG bridges the gap in the provision of needed services that are not available through other public assistance programs. To ensure that the objectives of the CSBG Program are achieved, DPSS continued with the automation efforts piloted at CSS to provide funding, expenditures, and program performance information to contractors.

By automating these functions, DPSS will be able to electronically submit reports for 100 CSBG agencies, reduce paper flow, save time, effectively track the status of report submissions, and provide departmental management, and your Board, with instant status on funding, expenditures and programs. Further automation will include electronic generation of insurance expiration reminders, waivers and various notices for program participants to ensure continuation of program benefits and services. Additionally, the automation will allow the CSBG agencies to electronically submit State required data, save time in the preparation of State reports, and eliminate manual compilation and computation errors on Client Characteristics and National Performance Indicators.

Accessibility to DPSS Headquarters

Initially, there were concerns by provider agencies regarding attendance at mandatory meetings and training, as well as the re-location of CSBG staff to DPSS Headquarters in the City of Industry. Specifically, the agencies were concerned with the increased cost for mileage and time for agency staff to travel to and from DPSS Headquarters. To resolve these concerns, DPSS provided staff to meet with the agencies at the Department's Wilshire Boulevard facility, which is in close proximity to CSS' headquarters. To further mitigate any inconvenience to CSBG agencies, DPSS has continued to hold monthly CSBG agency meetings at CSS headquarters.

Community Action Board

On February 11, 2005, the A-C submitted a report on its investigation and review of the CAB. The report included ten recommendations to correct and improve the operation of the CAB. To date, seven of the ten recommendations have been implemented. The following services were provided to resolve deficiencies noted in the report. They include: 1) County Counsel provided training to the CAB and staff on Brown Act meeting requirements; 2) CSBG staff were provided 40 hours of comprehensive contract training, including State/County contracting regulations, policies and procedures; 3) CAB by-laws were amended to annually rotate the chair; 4) tracking and updating the terms of membership by the Executive Office of the Board on an electronic calendar so CAB members can be notified at least 90 days prior to the expiration of their term; 5) implementation of various budget and accounting controls by DPSS for all CAB operations; 6) established fiscal controls to ensure proper and timely use of all interest income earned from the CSBG program; and 7) County Counsel agreement to be present at CAB meetings to ensure compliance with Brown Act requirements.

The remaining three recommendations involve: 1) development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the CAB and the County; 2) narrowing CAB membership to individuals that can fully devote time to focus on the duties and responsibilities of the CAB; and 3) development of a policy and procedures manual for the conduct of CAB business. DPSS anticipates that these recommendations will be fully implemented by March 31, 2006.

Appropriation Reduction

During the FY 2005-06 budget process, your Board approved the transfer of salaries and employee benefits appropriation and 31.0 budgeted positions associated with the CSBG and OTS programs from CSS to DPSS. No further budgetary action is required.

Conclusion

After our review, we believe the transfer of the CSBG and OTS programs from CSS to DPSS resulted in more effective delivery of services to program participants and improved efficiency of program monitoring and reporting to the State through enhanced automation efforts. It is therefore recommended that DPSS retain the CSBG and OTS staff and programs.

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Additionally, DPSS has contracted with the firm of Moss, Levy & Hartzheim to conduct an audit of 72 of 104 CSBG and OTS contracts and will report back to your Board with the findings of their review.

Please let me know if you have any questions, or your staff may contact Brian Mahan of this office at (213) 974-1318.

DEJ:SRH:DL
GP:BAM:lbm

c: Auditor-Controller
Executive Officer of the Board of Supervisor
County Counsel
Department of Public Social Services

CSBG Transfer Board Report 2-25-06.bm